

THE SMALL-SCALE POULTRY FLOCK

A flock is a gathering of a group of same species animals in order to forage or travel with one another. In avians flocks are typically seen in association with migration. While this is true it can also be seen that flocking is important in safety from predation and foraging benefits. However it is also important to note that living in a flock can also come at a cost to the birds living within it. One of the fastest growing trends for small and beginning farmers is backyard poultry. Typically, poultry offers a small-scale livestock enterprise without requiring large amount of capital, land, time or equipment. Careful planning and preparation prior your poultry's arrival will help ensure the establishment of a healthy flock for your family's enjoyment and food production. Egg layers generally lay either white eggs or brown eggs. The most popular white egg breed is the White Leghorn. One consideration is to select a heavy breed that can withstand low winters. Heavier breeds generally lay brown eggs and include Americanas, Brahmas, Orpingtons, Silkes or Wyandottes. Prior to April, hatcheries may have a higher minimum order necessary to ensure safe shipping of live chicks. Preparing to keep a small flock doesn't have to take much time or money. Almost every farm and rural home has a place that can be fixed up to keep 25 to 100 chickens. Most urban and suburban ordinances, however, will limit the total number of birds allowed. Generally, all species of poultry can also eat chicken feed-chick feed or grower feed is appropriate for young birds that are fully feathered and living outdoors, but not yet mature enough to begin laying eggs and is readily available at farm supply stores. As they grow and develop and are laying eggs, you can easily switch to layer crumbles. The major factors influencing the poultry industry are climate, availability and cost of land, capital and labour, proximity to markets, competitive efficiency of integrators, consumer satisfaction through safety, quality and flock welfare, environmental acceptability of large operations and successful implementation of international trade and above all, the price of feed ingredients determine the profitability of poultry management.

Contents: 1. Introduction to Flock 1, 2. Organic Diets and Feeding for Small Poultry Flocks, 2. The Small Flock for Poultry Meat, 3. Typical Structure of Chicken Meat Flocks, 4. The Broiler Chicken Industry, 5. Poultry Processing, 6. Feeding Chickens for Best Health and Performance, 7. Use of Nanotechnology in Meat Packaging and Production, 8. Poultry Husbandry.

About the Author



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enough to defend themselves if the need arises. Owning a small flock of chickens is increasing in popularity, particularly in areas where local ordinances prohibit larger domestic animals, but allow for birds and/or small animals. Chickens not only furnish a ready source of home-grown meat and eggs, but also provide great pleasure as exhibition stock and even as pets. The purpose of this fact sheet is to give an overview of basic housing principles for small flocks of chickens.

Keeping poultry totally confined together with fence and covered runs are your best protection from predators. If you are building a new facility, consider laying a concrete floor, and start the wall with one or two concrete blocks. This prevents rodents, snakes, and predators from digging under the walls and the floors. Windows and doors must be securely covered with heavy-gauge mesh wire or screening when opened.

Generally, all species of poultry can also eat chicken feed-chick feed or grower feed is appropriate for young birds that are fully feathered and living outdoors, but not yet mature enough to begin laying eggs and is readily available at farm supply stores. As they grow and develop and are laying eggs, you can easily switch to layer crumbles. The best way, though, to ensure that all species are getting the nutrients that they need to be healthy is to allow them adequate free range time. They will instinctively egg-splore and forage, eating a diet rich in their species-specific nutrients. Adding in daily meal leftovers are a great way to give them an added treat and to do away with kitchen scraps at the same time!

The major factors influencing the poultry industry are climate, availability and cost of land, capital and labour, proximity to markets, competitive efficiency of integrators, consumer satisfaction through safety, quality and flock welfare, environmental acceptability of large operations and successful implementation of international trade and above all, the price of feed ingredients determine the profitability of poultry management.

– Author

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Introduction to Flock

FLOCK (BIRDS)

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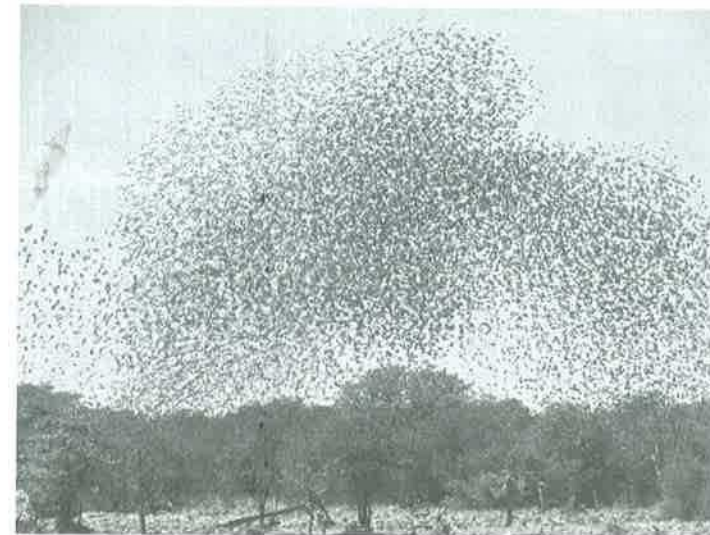


Fig. Red-billed queleas form enormous flocks—sometimes tens of thousands strong.

The definition of flock is narrow, only focusing on a single species existing within a flock. However the existence of mixed flocks are also present in the environment and consist of at least two or more species. In avians the species that tend to flock together are typically similar in taxonomy as well as morphological characters such as size and shape. By having a flock with multiple species present, the defence against predation increases. Defence against predators is particularly important in closed habitats such as forests where early